

Applicant: Bicek et al.
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Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (withdrawn) A stent comprising a radially-expandable body having first and second axial ends, at least one bendable tab extending from said first axial end, said tab being bendable to at least partially overlap said body for forcibly engaging a sheath.
2. (withdrawn) A stent as in claim 1, wherein said stent is generally cylindrical.
3. (withdrawn) A stent as in claim 1, wherein at least one bendable tab extends from said second axial end, said tab being bendable to at least partially overlap said body.
4. (withdrawn) A stent as in claim 1, wherein a plurality of said tabs extend from said first axial end.
5. (withdrawn) A stent as in claim 1, wherein said at least one tab has a non-linear shape.

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6. (withdrawn) A stent as in claim 1, wherein said at least one tab is unitarily formed with said body.
7. (withdrawn) A stent as in claim 1, further comprising at least one barb extending from at least one said tab.
8. (withdrawn) A method of preparing a covered stent for implantation, said method comprising:
 - providing a stent having a radially-expandable body with first and second axial ends, at least one bendable tab extending from said first axial end;
 - disposing a sheath in concentric arrangement with said body; and
 - bending at least one of said tabs into engagement with said sheath.
9. (withdrawn) A method as in claim 8, wherein said sheath is disposed radially outwardly of said stent.
10. (withdrawn) A method as in claim 8, wherein said sheath is disposed radially inwardly of said stent.

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11. (withdrawn) A method as in claim 8, wherein said sheath is selected from the group consisting of a polymeric sleeve, a biomaterial sleeve, and a natural blood vessel.

12. (withdrawn) A method as in claim 11, wherein said sheath is treated with a drug selected from the group consisting of pharmaceutical agents, radioactive agents, bioactive agents, and combinations thereof.

13. (withdrawn) A method as in claim 8, further comprising disposing a second sheath in concentric arrangement with said body.

14. (withdrawn) A method as in claim 13, wherein said first-mentioned sheath is disposed externally of said stent, and said second sheath is disposed internally of said stent.

15. (withdrawn) A method as in claim 14, further comprising bending at least one of said tabs into engagement with said second sheath.

16. (withdrawn) A method as in claim 13, wherein said second sheath is interposed between said first-mentioned sheath and said stent.

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17. (currently amended) A covered stent comprising a main stent having a radially-expandable body, at least one support stent, and a sheath interposed between said body and said at least one support stent with no portions of said main stent being in contact with said at least one support stent, wherein said at least one support stent generates a relative pressing force with said main stent to hold said sheath in place, said pressing force solely acting to hold said sheath in place.

18. (original) A covered stent as in claim 17, wherein said at least one support stent is plastically-deformed.

19. (original) A covered stent as in claim 17, wherein said sheath is disposed radially outwardly of said main stent.

20. (original) A covered stent as in claim 17, wherein said sheath is disposed radially inwardly of said main stent.

21. (original) A covered stent as in claim 17, wherein said at least one support stent has an axial length which is less than the axial length of said body.

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22. (original) A covered stent as in claim 21, wherein said at least one support stent is disposed in proximity to an end of said body.

23. (original) A covered stent as in claim 17, wherein said sheath is selected from the group consisting of a polymeric sleeve, a biomaterial sleeve, and a natural blood vessel.

24. (original) A covered stent as in claim 23, wherein said sheath is treated with a drug selected from the group consisting of pharmaceutical agents, radioactive agents, bioactive agents, and combinations thereof.

25. (withdrawn) A covered stent as in claim 17, further comprising disposing a second sheath in concentric arrangement with said body.

26. (withdrawn) A covered stent as in claim 25, wherein said first-mentioned sheath is disposed externally of said main stent, and said second sheath is disposed internally of said main stent.

27. (withdrawn) A covered stent as in claim 26, wherein said second sheath is interposed between at least one of said support stents and said body.

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28. (withdrawn) A method of preparing a covered stent for implantation, said method comprising:

providing a main stent having a radially-expandable body;
disposing a sheath in concentric arrangement with said body; and,
disposing at least one support stent externally of said sheath such that said sheath is interposed between said body and said at least one support stent, and no portion of said main stent is in contact with said at least one support stent.

29. (withdrawn) A method as in claim 28 further comprising deforming plastically said at least one support stent.

30. (withdrawn) A method as in claim 28, wherein said sheath is disposed radially outwardly of said stent.

31. (withdrawn) A method as in claim 28, wherein said sheath is disposed radially inwardly of said stent.

32. (withdrawn) A method as in claim 28, wherein said sheath is selected from the group consisting of a polymeric sleeve, a biomaterial sleeve, and a natural blood vessel.

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33. (withdrawn) A method as in claim 32, wherein said sheath is treated with a drug selected from the group consisting of pharmaceutical agents, radioactive agents, bioactive agents, and combinations thereof.

34. (withdrawn) A method as in claim 28, further comprising disposing a second sheath in concentric arrangement with said body.

35. (withdrawn) A method as in claim 34, wherein said first-mentioned sheath is disposed externally of said main stent, and said second sheath is disposed internally of said main stent.

36. (withdrawn) A method as in claim 34, wherein said second sheath is interposed between at least one of said support stents and said body.

37. (withdrawn) A method as in claim 28, wherein said at least one support stent has an axial length which is less than the axial length of said body.

38. (withdrawn) A method as in claim 37, wherein said at least one support stent is disposed in proximity to an end of said body.

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39. (new) A covered stent as in claim 17, wherein said sheath is not bonded to said at least one support stent or to said main stent.